

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

I. Election

The Office Action requires that Applicant elects one of the following two allegedly patentably distinct species for further prosecution in the present application:

Group I.) The embodiment of Figures 1 and 2; and

Group II.) The embodiments of Figures 3 and 4.

The Applicant hereby respectfully traverses this election/restriction requirement, with amendments, and hereby requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw this election/restriction requirement. As required, however, the **Applicant hereby provisionally elects Group I, the embodiment of Figures 1 and 2 (claims 1-8, 11-18, and 20) for further prosecution in this application.** Applicants reserve the right to file divisional applications on any un-elected species.

Under 35 U.S.C. § 121, restriction is appropriate if two or more independent and distinct inventions are claimed in one application. As set forth in MPEP § 802.01, inventions are independent if there is no disclosed relationship between the two or more subjects disclosed, and inventions are distinct if two or more subjects as disclosed are capable of separate manufacture, use, or sale as claimed.

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Office Action attempts to explain how a first embodiment is distinct from a second embodiment because these two embodiments require different fields of search and/or the prior art applicable to one embodiment would not likely to be applicable to the other embodiment. However, the Examiner fails to explain how the first embodiment is independent from the second embodiment. That is, both the first embodiment and the second embodiment are directed to a process for the firm connection of semiconductor wafers. Thus, the first embodiment and the second embodiment are related and are not

independent from each other. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the election/restriction requirement is improper, and the withdrawal of such election/restriction requirement is respectfully requested.

II. The Claim Amendments

Amendments to claims 1-8, 11-13, 15-18, and 20 are submitted herewith. Applicants believe that such amendments are not substantive and respectfully request entry of the same.

CONCLUSION

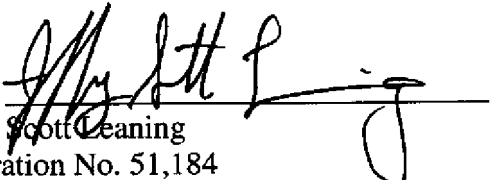
In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance, and an early indication of the same is courteously solicited. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone at the below listed telephone number, in order to expedite resolution of any issues and to expedite passage of the present application to issue, if any comments, questions, or suggestions arise in connection with the present application.

In the event that the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office requires a fee to enter this Reply or to maintain the present application pending, please charge such variance to the undersigned's Deposit Account No. 50-0206.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: September 11, 2008

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JSL/dd